

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 COME-00 GSA-02 INT-08

TRSE-00 OPIC-12 AID-20 L-03 H-03 PRS-01 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-07 DRC-01 /115 W

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R 091415ZNOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

RO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4412

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

CONFIDENTIAL BANGUI 1164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EMIN, CTO

SUBJECT: GOCAR OPENS UP DIAMOND TRADE, REMOVES US ADVISER.

1. GOCAR PUBLISHED THREE DECREES NOVEMBER 5 WHICH OPENED

UP DIAMOND-BUYING TRADE IN CAR, APPROVED ESTABLISHMENT OF
NEW DIAMOND-BUYING COMPANY HERE AND REMOVED ALBERT JOLIS,
PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN COMPANY DIAMOND DISTRIBUTORS INC.
(DDI), FROM HIS POSITION AS PRESIDENT BOKASSA'S OFFICIAL
DIAMOND ADVISER. FOURTH DECREE NOVEMBER 9 ANNOUNCED
CREATION OF ANOTHER NEW COMPANY: "SOCIETE LEBANO CENTGAFRICAIN."

2. TRADE HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN RESTRICTED TO FOUR COMPANY
CONSORTIUM ESTABLISHED IN AGREEMENT WITH GOCAR AND IN
WHICH DDI AND ISRAELI STATE-OWNED COMPANY SICPAD OCCUPIED
PREEMINENT POSITION AND ACCOUNTED FOR BULK OF DIAMOND
PURCHASES IN AR. FIRST TWO AND LATEST DECREES IN EFFECT
ABROGATZ THESE ARRANGEMENTS AND CHALLENGE THIS POSITION.
FIRST NEW COMPANY IS REPORTEDLY DIRECTED BY HAIK ARSLANIAN,
LEBANESE CITIZEN OPERATING OUT OF ANTWERP WHO HAS PRE-
VIOUSLY DONE BUSINESS IN CAR AND WHO APPRANTLY ENJOYS
RATHER DUBIOUS REPUTATION IN TRADE CIRCLES. WE HAVE NO
INFORMATION YET ON SECOND COMPANY.

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EM COMMENT: JOLIS' DISMISSAL COMES AS PARTICULAR SURPRISE
SINCE HE HAD FRIENDLY MEETING HERE WITH PRESIDENT IN LATE
OCTOBER AND RECEIVED NO INDICATION OF ANY DISSATISFACTION.
REASONS BEHIND BOKASSA'S DECISIONS ARE NOT YET CLEAR BUT
COULD BE RELATED TO CONTACTS AND PRESSURES HE ENCOUNTERED
DURING RECENT TRAVELS ABROAD, AND HIS PRESSING CURRENT NEED
FOR CASH AND INCREASED GOCAR REVENUES. WILL REPORT AND
COMMENT FURTHER AS ADDITIONAL INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE. DALE

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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